Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1633 - November 28, 2008

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1633 with a release date of
Friday, November 28th, 2008 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a QST. Lots of repeaters could loose their homes down under as one Australian state enacts new site fees. Also, the DX drought may be over as astronomers say the new solar cycle is here and we celebrate the life of a ham who refused to let his physical condition interfere with his devotion to the hobby. Find out the details on this Thanksgiving Day edition of Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) and report number 1633 coming your way right now

(Billboard Cart Here)

**

REPEATER NEWS: AUSTRALIAN REPEATERS COULD LOOSE SITES OVER NEW FEES

Repeater owners in the Australian state of New South Wales are not happy over a government decision to raise site rental fees and it could cause a number of them to go QRT. Graham Kemp, VK4BB, of the WIA News, explains what has transpired:

--

Phil Wait VK2DKN in a news posting to wia.org.au says that the Director General of the NSW Department of Lands has written to the WIA upholding the Departments decision to impose a $367 (Australian) fee for each amateur radio facility located on NSW Crown Land.

The WIA had written to the Director General in August arguing for special consideration for communications facilities maintained by small amateur radio clubs, and highlighting the strategic community resource that amateur radio communications facilities provide during emergencies.

In the Departments reply the Director General advises that the site rental fees are prescribed under NSW State legislation, and cannot be reduced below the minimum rent provisions in that legislation.

This is bad news for small amateur radio clubs which maintain repeater facilities on NSW Crown Land, and also for those larger clubs which have several affected repeater sites. The likely outcome is the closure of a number of rural amateur radio repeater facilities, or at least their relocation to less favorable sites.

On the other hand, larger well resourced clubs may welcome the opportunity to enter into an agreement which guarantees secure tenure for their repeater sites located on Crown Land.

I'm Graham Kemp, VK4BB in Brisbane, Australia, for the Amateur Radio Newsline.

--

Amateur radio clubs with repeaters in the region have a choice to make. Its pay up or go Q-R-T. That's because failure to enter into a rental agreement
when asked to do so by the New South Wales Department of Lands may result in eviction from a Crown Land site. (WIA News)

**

DX PROPAGATION: SCIENTISTS AY THAT THE NEW SUNSPOTS ARE HERE

Improved band may soon be on their way. Scientists say that after more than two years of few sunspots, even fewer solar flares, the sun is finally showing signs of life.

David Hathaway is a sunspot forecaster of the NASA Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville Alabama. In his opinion the solar minimum is behind us. He said that in October scientists counted five sunspot groups,. Hathaway says that this may not sound like much, but in a year with record-low numbers of sunspots and long stretches of spotlessness, five is significant.

Even more significant is the fact that four of the five sunspot groups belonged to Solar Cycle 24. That's the new and long-awaited next installment of the sun's 11 year solar cycle. Hathaway says that October was the first time sunspots from new Solar Cycle 24 outnumbered spots from old Solar Cycle 23.

Hathaway adds that this is a good sign that the new cycle is taking off. This will be welcome news to the ears of hams who have waited a long time to work some new and possibly rare DX. (NASA)

**

BREAKING DX NEWS: DESECHO TO BE ON IN FEBRUARY

The Desecheo Island DXpedition is now officially on for early next year. This as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service notifies the team that February 12th to the 26th 2009, will be the dates allocated for the radio operation.

These dates are coordinated with other Fish and Wildlife Service research activities scheduled on other parts of Desecheo. It also handles the scheduling security personnel for the camp.

Only fifteen operators will be allowed on the island at any given time. A total of 6 to 8 stations will be operational on the High Frequency bands including 160 and 6 meters.

Desecheo Island is #2 on the worlds Most Wanted DX List. For the latest news, please go to the team's website. Its in cyberspace at www.kp5us (Wï¿½GJ, K4UEE)

**

BREAKING DX NEWS: SPRATLEY OPERATION ON HOLD

Meantime, hams who have waited a long time to make contact with the Spratley Island group will have to be patient a bit longer. This as its announced that a planned operation has been put on hold. Amateur Radio Newslines's Don Carlson, KQ6FM, has more:

--

The long awaited 9M0 DXpedition to the Spratley Islands has been postponed. A team of six operators was expectedto activate Pulau Layang Layang Island in the Spratly group in March 2009.

Now, an according to their Web page dated November 14th puts the operation in to a state of delay. It says that due to a combination of personal and logistical reasons that it has been necessary to postpone the operation to a later date.

The announcement goes on to sat that its is hoped that the DXpedition will go ahead at a later date but none was announced. The posting notes that donations will be returned to those sponsors who made contributions to the proposed operation. More is on-line at www.spratly2009.com

Im Don Carlson, KQ6FM, in Reno.

--

We will have more DX related items later on in this weeks Newsline report. (E-Mail)

**

BREAK 1

 From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the Pentucket Radio Club repeater serving Groveland Massachusetts

(5 sec pause here)

**

ENFORCEMENT: EVEN BROADCASTERS CANNOT INTERFERE

A broadcasters who interfered with other broadcaster has been fined by the FCC. This as Florida's Black Crow Radio, LLC gets hit with a $18,400 monetary forfeiture that's being paid in two parts. Amateur Radio Newsline's Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, explains:

--

The fine issued to Black Crow Radio is actually marked down from $23,000 and more than half of it has already been paid. Here's the story.

The forfeiture is based on allegations that Black Crow Radio's station WNDB AM, in Daytona Beach, Florida failed to ensure that emissions removed by 60 kHz to 75 kHz from the fundamental frequency of 1150 kHz are attenuated 65

dB below the unmodulated carrier level. Its also charged with failure to maintain effective locked fences around the bases of two of its antenna towers.

According to the November 13th notice, this past February 26, the agency began investigating a complaint that WNDB was causing interference to stations on 1070 kHz and 1230 kHz . Also that it was the source of general interference up and down the AM band. Agents from the Commission's Tampa Office monitored WNDB on its licensed frequency of 1150 kHz using a standard car radio and readily observed that the station could be heard up and down the AM band. The agents also heard WNDB's signal intermittently interfering with broadcast operations on 1070 and 1230 kHz.

On September 24th the Tampa Office issued a Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture to Black Crow in the amount of $23,000 for the rules violations. Black Crow admitted part of the violation notice and submitted a payment in the amount of $12,000 for those violations. However it requested cancellation or reduction of the remaining $11,000 proposed forfeiture.

In its response the FCC said that due to its compliance for the 13 years WNDB had been on the air that it would reduce the remaining amount of the fine to $6400. However, it would not dismiss it entirely.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline I'm Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, in Los Angeles.

--

Black Crow Radio LLC was given the customary 30 days to pay the outstanding remainder of the fine or to file a further appeal. (FCC)

**

ENFORCEMENT: WHAT A DIFFERENCE 140 FEET CAN MAKE

Here's one for the record books, and we mean literally. The FCC's San Francisco field office has cited United States Cellular Corporation for having one of its towers a rather small distance from where it was supposed to have been put up. Or is it at the correct location and is the FCC wrong? Here's the rest of this rather strange story.

According to a Notice of Violation released on October 10th, the FCC said that an August 28th inspection showed the tower in question to be approximately 140 feet from its registered location. Note that the violation is for an approximate rather than verified distance from the registration site. That's leading a lot of engineers to question by what legal authority the FCC can guess at a location and issue a citation based on this guesswork.

None the less, the FCC gave United States Cellular 20 days from the issuance of the Notice to submit a written statement concerning this matter. The response was to fully explain why each violation occurred, contain a statement of the specific actions taken to correct each violation and preclude recurrence, and include a time line for completion of pending corrective actions.

You can read the entire Notice of Violation at: http://www.fcc.gov/eb/FieldNotices/2003/DOC-286437A1.html) (FCC, CGC)

**

RADIO POLITICS: WATCH THE FCC CHANGE

According to news reports, while FCC Chairman Kevin Martin says that he is in no hurry to leave his post, we could see a three-member FCC for a while. This, depending on how long it takes President-elect Barack Obama's transition team to determine who the new Commission chairman will be.

Assuming Republican Commissioner Deborah Tate leaves because her term is up and that Martin leaves after the inauguration, there could be a 2 to 1 FCC for a while. The assumption is that one of the Democrats currently serving as a Commissioner will be named as interim chairman. This would mean that Michael Copps and Jonathan Adelstein along with Robert McDowell would make up the Commissioners for a while.

Several names that have surfaced as possibilities for FCC chairman. These include Julius Genachowski and Don Gips. Both are former FCC staffers under President Bill Clinton. (RW)

**

RADIO LAW: SENATORS LOOKING AT NEW FAIRNESS DOCTRINE

Democrats in the Congress are pushing for the reinstatement of the so-called "Fairness Doctrine" which forced broadcasters to offer equal time to both sides of controversial issues. According to the trade newspaper the Hollywood Reporter, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and such influential Democratic senators as Barbara Boxer and Charles Schumer are pushing for its return, or something like it.

The Fairness Doctrine was abolished in 1987, paving the way for the type of talk radio that seems to dominate the A.M. broadcast band these days. With most talk radio dominated by conservatives. Now with President Elect Barack Obama moving into the White House in January of 2009, talk on Capital Hill about reinstating or even broadening the scope of a new Fairness Doctrine has again begun to surface once again. (NAB News)

**

COMMUNICATIONS LAW: MUSIC INDUSTRY CHALLANGED ON DIGITAL MUSIC SHARING

The music industry's litigation of private citizens who share songs via the Internet is coming under constitutional challenge. This with word that a Harvard Law School professor has launched a constitutional assault against a federal copyright law at the heart of the industry's aggressive tactic which has brought in monetary payments from thousands of music file swappers since 2003.

According to news reports law professor Charles Nesson has come to the defense of a Boston University graduate student targeted in one of the music industry's lawsuits. He argues that the Digital Theft Deterrence and Copyright Damages Improvement Act of 1999 is unconstitutional because it

effectively lets the Recording Industry Association of America which is a private organization to carry out civil enforcement of a criminal law. He also says the music industry group has abused the legal process by threatening the possibility of lengthy and costly lawsuits in an effort to intimidate people into settling cases out of court.

Charles Nesson is the founder of Harvard's Berkman Center for Internet and Society. He says that his goal is to stop the courts from allowing themselves to be used as a collection agency for the music industry. By taking on the case, Nesson hopes to challenge the basis for the music industry's suit, and all others like it. His challenge against the music industry was filed in the U.S. District Court in Boston, and is considered by many legal experts one of the most determined attempts to derail the industry's ongoing litigation against those who download and swap music files on-line. (Published news reports)

**

HAM RADIO ON THE NET: QRZ ACTS AGAINST SPAMMERS

The QRZ.com website as introduced new measures to prevent its users e-mail addresses from being harvested by spammers and their robot programs. Up until now the solution to this problem has been to display the address as a graphic image instead of plain text. While this works reasonably well to stop spammers, it also caused problems for many of our vision impaired

Wanting to serve all of its users, the website has now installed new javascript browser code that leaves the email encoded on the page until the user initiates a mouse action to display the address. The address displayed is in plain text, and is clickable to make sending off to other members e-mails easier. But as a safeguard against spammers QRZ has also installed code that only will enable the display of e-mail addresses only to other ham members of QRZ. In other words, you can see all the other information simply by doing a search but to see an e-mail address you must first log in

The managers of QRZ.com want to thank Jeff Iddings, W4GPL, for some great suggestions that helped develop this solution. (QRZ)

**

PUBLIC SERVICE: LA MARATHON MOVES TO MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

Some news for hams who are involved in the Los Angeles Marathon. Word that the event which was till now held the first Sunday in March, will move to Memorial Day beginning in 2009.

Organizers said runners who registered for next year's race will be automatically signed up for the May 25, 2009 date. Those who already have paid the entry fee will be reimbursed in full if they are unable to participate. Volunteers such as ham radio communicators will likely be contacted by their supervisory personnel in regard to the date change.

More than 25,000 people competed in the 2008 Los Angeles Marathon earlier this year. (Published news reports)

**

NAMES IN THE NEWS: NCDXF ANNOUNCES ELECTION RESULTS

Some names in the news. Len Geraldi, K6ANP, is the first up. He's been selected as President of the famed Northern California DX Foundation.

The election took place at the organizations Board of Directors meeting on November 18th in Albany, California. Filling the other offices are Vice President Al Burnham K6RIM, Secretary Tom McShane NW6P and Treasurer Bruce Butler W6OSP.

The big surprise was the announcement by Rusty Epps, W6OAT, to retire from the organizations board of directors. This following 35 years of service to the group. More information about the Northern California DX Foundation is on-line at www.ncdxf.org. (NCDXF)

**

NAMES IN THE NEWS: ARRL ANNOUNCES RESULTS OF DIVISIONAL RACES

The ARRL Delta Division has a new Director and Vice Director, while hams in the Great Lakes Division voted to keep their incumbent Vice Director.

On Friday, November 21, ARRL staff members opened ballots for the Director and Vice Director races in the Delta Division and the Vice Director race in the Great Lakes Division. After all the ballots were counted, Gary Johnston, KI4LA, of Edgewood, Kentucky, was elected to keep his seat as Vice Director of the Great Lakes Division.

  Delta Division Director Henry Leggette, WD4Q, of Memphis, Tennessee, did not seek re-election this term. Former Louisiana Section Manager Mickey Cox, K5MC, of West Monroe, with 1148 votes, was declared the new Delta Division Director. Arkansas Section Manager David Norris, K5UZ, won the Vice Directors seat.

In all other races, those running unopposed were elected or re-elected. Terms for Directors and Vice Directors begin at noon on January 1, 2009 and run for three years. (ARRL)

**

BREAK 2

Wishing everyone a Happy Thanksgiving from the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

**

EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: WSPR SETS NEW DX RECORDS

A newly developed digital mode is breaking all sorts of QRP records. Its

called the Weak Signal Propagation Reporter. It was developed by the man who gave us WSJT: Joe Taylor, W1SJT. Taylor calls it WSPR. Justin Giles-Clark, VK7TW, is in South Hobart, Tasmania, is here to tell us of the of the distance records broken and other that have been set:

--

Back on Friday, 31 Oct, Bob VK7KRW had a two way contact with Richard, N2JR, in Virginia, USA. on the 80M band, over a distance of 16300Kms and both stations were running 2watts, yes, only 2 watts!

Bob's antenna is an Inverted V dipole and Richard was using a Butternut ground mounted vertical. The SNR at that stage was around -25dB.

Bob VK7KRW has been recently experimenting with WSPR on the HF bands (15, 17, 20, 30, 40 & 80M) and he has had a number of QRP contacts into the UK, EU, JA, USA, Canada and ZL.

Bob mentioned that he reduced power to 1W and he was still received by Richard but unfortunately heard nothing in return at that power level.

Later that evening Bob received an email from Pat, F6IRF, who runs the WSPR net, confirming that we had set a new world distance record for a two way QRP contact on the 80M band. Bob mentioned that stations in the Northern hemisphere are desperately looking for more stations in the southern regions so if people want something to experiment with, try WSPR.

A call went out on the VK7 Regional News and records started to tumble with Dick VK7DIK making a bilateral contact with Joe Taylor K1JT over a distance of 23352km on 40m with just 5 watts.

Congratulation to Bob, Richard, Dick and Joe.

The powers just keep reducing and distances just keep increasing. Larry WB3ANQ was able to get through to VK6DI using just 5mW (+7dBm) over a distance 18615Km.

WSPRnet.org has all the information required and links to the software. The URL is: http://wsprnet.org/drupal/

Cheers from Justin VK7TW.

--

Again, the URL to get the WSPR software is WWW.wsprnet.org/drupal. With it, QRPDX seems to be a breeze. (WIA News)

**

WORLDBEAT - THE NETHERLANDS: HOLLAND ADOPTS AMBER ALERTS

Turning to news from around the globe, police in the Netherlands have started using Amber Alerts to notify the public of missing or abducted children. The Dutch system will incorporate pop-ups on personal computers, large digital advertising screens, e-mail, SMS text, instant messenger, RSS news feeds and Web site alerts via Flash. No word if hams in that

nation plan to connect their repeaters to the system as has been done elsewhere.

The Netherlands Police Agency expects to issue an Amber Alert between five and 10 times a year. Amber Alerts began in the United States in the late 1990's as a tribute to a Texas 9 year old named Amber Hagerman who was abducted and slain. Since then several other nations around the world now have created similar systems. (RW)

**

DX

In DX, word that Bill Tackett, KN4N, is reportedly looking for operators for a Gunatanamo Bay, Cuba based operation to take place next spring or sooner. Conditions include that he or she must be active duty or retired military, hold a General class or higher license be in good health and preferably a non-smoker. If you know anyone interested in joining such an operation have that person contact kn4n (at) comcast (dot) net

And IV3YIM, is active as portable OD5/from Lebanon. He will be there until April 2009 and is active mostly in SSB/RTTY on 80 through 10 meters. Also listen out for him on CW and SK. QSL direct or via the bureau to his home call.

Lastly, keep on the lookout for Zimbabwe as 7Z1HB, comes on as Z21LS. He will operate mostly in SSB on 20 meters between November 30th and December 9th QSL this one direct to 7Z1HB or to DE1ZHB via the bureau.

(Above from various DX news sources).

**

A FINAL REMEMBERENCE: CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF ARRL PRESIDENT EMERITUS GEORGE WILSON W4OYI

And lastly this week we say a final 73 to a friend of many years. This with the word of the passing of ARRL President Emeritus George S. Wilson, W4OYI, early on Tuesday, November 25th.

George's death hits very close to home because for many years he was a member of the committee that judges our Amateur Radio Newsline Young Ham of the Year Award and a very close personal friend to all of us. Mark Abramowicz, NT-V, heads that committee. Please join Mark as he takes a look at the life of the man who lead the ARRL in what some may say were among the organizations most glorious days and left a legacy of accomplishment that few hams will likely ever match:

--

I have not had the pleasure to speak directly with George Wilson W4OYI., but his e-mails and input have been invaluable over the years I've served as chairman of Amateur Radio Newsline's Young Ham of the Year award committee.

He was one of our special judges and his insights into the candidates were

very much appreciated by the committee.

George's loss is truly difficult for his family and the amateur radio community who knew and loved him. But his legacy is one that, I think we can safely say, is unmatched by any ARRL president in recent times.

George Wilson served as president of the organization from 1992 until he suffered a stroke in 1995 while in Washington D.C. representing the ARRL.

Up until the time of his death, George was president emeritus of the American Radio Relay League, one of only a handful of people ever granted this honor.

During his time as ARRL president, he was instrumental in a number of initiatives including helping to bring about the vanity call sign program and preserving access to sections of the 900 Mhz band for amateur radio.

And, it was in 1993 that George Wilson who used his legal skills as an attorney to argue an amateur radio case in federal court, which, in part, led to the famous PRB-1 rule from the FCC which solidifies ham radio tower privileges.

In 2004, George Wilson was presented the Special Achievement Award from the Dayton Amateur Radio Association for his outstanding record of service.

George is one of the few hams who came through the ranks, so to speak, to achieve the ARRL presidency and the other recognition he so richly deserved.

It was 1948 when 16-year-old George Wilson was first licensed by the FCC. He rode the bus from his home in Owensboro, Kentucky to Nashville, Tennessee to take that test.

He waited seven months to learn he had passed the FCC's Class B test and he was assigned the call sign W4OYI, which he kept for his entire life.

George's first contact was on 40 meter CW with a home-brew rig. It was 1949 when George got his first taste for public service when the Green River flooded the community of Calhoun.

That was in the days before 2-meter HTs and cell phones. George and his fellow hams used CW rigs on two ferries and one installed at the courthouse to dispatch rescue crews to help those stranded in the flooding. It's believed those actions saved many lives.

George also is responsible for coming up with a special drill for emergency communicators in the 1960s. It was called the envelope drill and it was described this way in a 1962 article in QST.

"Groups of radio amateurs meet to hold an emergency drill. A net control station is set up and teams go out in their cars to specific locations. Each team carries with it a few sealed envelopes. Once established at their locations, they open the envelopes containing an emergency scenario and check in with the net control who offers further instructions and awaits additional messages and traffic."

It became a popular way to train emergency communicators and it was George

Wilson who devised it.

W4OYI has served as an assistant emergency coordinator and official relay station in the ARRL's Radio Emergency Corp, the predecessor to the Amateur Radio Emergency Service. He also served as a Section Emergency Coordinator and later Section Communications Manager in Kentucky.

It was George who worked with local officials in his community to convince that the National Weather Service during the mid-1970s to install an early warning radio system. This happened after a twister had hit nearby Brandenburg, Kentucky.

The Owensboro Hydroplane Races - the ones featuring those big, high-speed boats racing up and down the Ohio River - they had George Wilson to thank for overseeing communications for the event for many years.

And, it was George Wilson who fostered use of Amateur Television technology to monitor the boats from the center of the Owensboro Ohio River Bridge.

W4OYI later became a vice director and later division director. He was elected to a vice president's post in the ARRL and later became first vice president. When the incumbent ARRL President Larry Price,W4RA, announced he would not run for another term, George Wilson was elected to succeed him.

Although confined to a wheelchair in his last years, W4OYI was active on the ham bands and monitored his local repeater for those in need of information or a simple chat.

He is survived by his wife, Marian. They were married for 51 years. He also has a son, Berry, and a daughter, Jennifer, and two grandchildren.

Marian has asked Amateur Radio Newsline to tell all of George's fellow hams that they can remember him by making a donation to the American Red Cross.

For the final time: "W4OYI, this is NT3V, saying 73 on behalf of all of us who have benefited from your generous contributions to the amateur radio service."

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Mark Abramowicz, NT3V, in Philadelphia.

--

George Wilson, W4OYI, was one of the true good guys of ham radio. As such he would not want us to mourn his passing. Knowing George as I did he would only want us all to carry on the traditions that have made amateur radio the great service to mankind that it is. And his dedication to it will never be forgotten. (ARNewsline(tm))

**

NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's W-I-A News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is

newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937,
Arcadia, California 91066.

For now, wishing everyone a great start to a wonderful holiday season, I'm
Bill Pasternak WA6ITF, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) is Copyright 2008. All rights reserved.